

[20 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

The Report of the Group on Telecom & IT Convergence in this regard is, however, awaited.

Private participation in Internet Telephony

*354. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to legalise Internet Telephony as it will be a low cost alternative for domestic and international long distance calls in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the private entrepreneurs can also enter into Internet Telephony; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) While at present, in accordance with the New Telecom Policy (NTP-99), Internet Telephony is not permitted. Government is also required under this policy to monitor technological innovations and their impact on national development and review this issue at an appropriate time. Accordingly, Government have constituted an Expert Group to review the matter. The report of the Group is awaited.

Financing of private sector projects by OIDB

*355. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether OIDB's charter permit them to finance projects implemented by private sector companies;

(b) if so, the names of the private sector companies which have received financing from OIDB;

(c) the details of pending applications with OIDB from private sector companies for financing their projects; and

(d) whether Government are averse to OIDB financing projects by private sector companies who are committing large resources for Indian Oil sector?